(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that it takes several days for the dak to be delivered to certain remote tribal areas of the State of Tripura and if so, whether Government contemplate to make the postal services in Thope areas quicker and more efficient; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) As a general approach, liberalised norms are being followed for opening of post offices in all States and Union territories for following areas:

(i) Areas identified as tribal for purposes of implementation of tribal sub plans/integrated tribal development projects.

(ii) Areas identified for implementation of hill area development programme; and

(iii) Areas notified as backward by the respective State Government/UT administration for purposes of accelerated development.

Particulars of such areas in Tripura are being ascertained and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) and (d) There is a sorting mail office in Agartala which deals with inward and outward mail. First class mail posted in Assam/Meghalaya/Manipur/Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh for Tripura are air-lifted from Guwahati and Silchar while Mail from Delhi is airlifted direct to Agartala via Calcutta. Mails from other Circles are concentrated in Calcutta, sorted and closed bags despatched for Agartala Sorting Office or Head Post Office as the case may be. Normally, mails reach Agartala on the 2nd or 4th day of posting Routing of mail to rural areas of Tripura is done through transport buses. Monitoring exercises undertaken show no undue delay to mail to that State.

National Highways in Andhra Pradesh

2352. SHRI PRABHAKAR RAO KALVALA: Will the Minster of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what criteria are being adopted by Government to find out the length of National Highways in different States;

(b) the present existing length in Kms. of the National Highways in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Governments consideration to include the 260 kilometre road from Hyderabad to Venkatapuram via Warangal, Nagaram road as National Highways in the current financial year; and

(d) if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) There is no criteria for determining length of National Highways in different States. Roads are declared as National Highways not on the basis of any area, region or State but keeping in view the country as a whole which is distinct from the local requirement.

(b) The present length of National Highways in Andhra Pradesh is 2299 kms.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Development of Machilipatnam port in Andhra Pradesh

2353. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of SURFARE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to develop Machilipatnam port in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal;